THE

WEEKLY REVIEW,

AND

DRAMATIC CRITIC.

CONTENTS.

Green-Room Gossip, . . .	*Page* 126
The Excise System, ...	127
Edinburgh Amusements—	
Theatre-Royal, ...	131
Adelphi Theatre, ...	133
Theatre-Royal Glasgow, . . .	139
Miss Rebecca Isaacs, ...	*ib.*
Perverted use of the Bible, . . .	140

Sam Cowell's Collection of Comic Songs—
"Billy Barlow"—(*concluded.*)—"The Cork Leg"
—"Useful Knowledge"—(*to be continued.*)

Price 2d.

EDINBURGH:

H. ROBINSON, 11 GREENSIDE STREET.

GLASGOW: LOVE, NELSON STREET; AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

Green Room Gossip.

(FROM A LONDON CORRESPONDENT.)

Ryder of the Princess's has been unwell for some time.

The Pantomime at the Theatre-Royal, Dublin, is to be "Gulliver's Travels." Same as played at the Adelphi, Edinburgh.

Mr Bartley takes his farewell of the stage, at the Princess's, very shortly.

Windsor theatricals take place in January.

"Uncle Tom's Cabin" is being played at nearly all the London theatres with the greatest success.

Nicolo Deulin is the clown at Saddler's Wells this year.

"*Uncle Tom's Cabin in Boston.*"—A very interesting drama, founded upon Mrs Stowe's popular book, will be produced at the Eagle Theatre to-night (October 18), for the first time in Boston! We understand that Mr Cowell (father of the well-known Sam. Cowell) has taken the utmost pains to put this new piece upon the stage in the most effective manner.

Madame Alboni has terminated a most triumphant series of concerts in New York, and appeared at Boston on the 19th ult.

ACROSTIC TO REBECCA.

R ebecca, full and fair we see,
E ver graceful, ever free;
B ust of beauty!—so bewitching,
E yes, the glance of love enriching,
C an we dream of beauties fair,
C an we dream of charms so rare,
A nd Rebecca's not be there!

WEEKLY REVIEW,

&c. &c.

No. 12.] FRIDAY, NOV. 12, 1852. [Price 2d

THE EXCISE SYSTEM.

"JAMES, MY FRIEND," AND "BILLY O'BRIEN."

(Continued from our last.)

road to clerical promotion, and by the aid of an influential namesake—some descendant of an hundred kings—obtained a place in the Excise. Billy was proud of his mission, and had grown into considerable rotundity in the course of his long service—by dint of moderate exercise and a plentiful supply of grog, to which he had access *ad libitum* at the fountain heads of the great streams of fire-water whereunto he was called to exercise his guaging abilities. Billy was of low stature, and rather indifferently fashioned in the nether man. Somewhat web-footed, he had a waddling sort of walk, and a constitutional dislike to ascents and descents of all kinds. He was invariably attired in a rusty suit of blacks, with a yellowish-white neckcloth plentifully begrimmed with "common brown," and a quill of portentous dimensions stuck behind his right ear. Fancy such a figure as we have described, with a round, good-natured countenance, small twinkling eye, and you have a full-length portrait of Billy O'Brien.

James and Billy were, on the whole, good friends—for no one could be really angry with the humorous, apologetic, stuttering, blundering Billy! He had, besides, acquired an amount of quiet, sedative philosophy, admirably in keeping with the slow motive power of his muscular system, and which fully armed him against all the buffetings of fortune. "Take the world asy" was one of his favourite maxims; and in the enjoyment of a "tinny of grog," nothing could put him out of temper. Billy, however, sometimes severely taxed the patience of his friend James, particularly on the Monday mornings, when it happened to be their turns of the night shift. It was the duty of Billy to be on the premises immediately on the stroke of twelve, but he frequently slept in for an hour or two together, keeping the whole establishment idle. Then would James open upon him in a tornado of wrath, vowing all sorts of vengeance on his devoted head. Billy, like most of his countrymen, never wanted an excuse, and the more ridiculous or frivolous the better did it serve his purpose.

"Come, now, James, my friend," he would say, "you know

I could'nt help it; sure I was on my feet exactly as the clock struck, but Mrs O'Brien coaxed me to bed again. Bear with me, friend James, bear with me. There's your brother Tom, he's always good-natured; but he's an Irishman, to be sure, and you're a Scotchman—all fire and turf, fire and smoke at the very first! Come, now, James, my friend, have a pinch of common brown, (holding out the box), and a tinny of grog, and take the world asy!"

There was no resisting the bland humour of Mr O'Brien, so entering the little apartment assigned for the use of those in charge, he might soon afterwards be seen in the enjoyment of his tinny, and chatting away with his mollified friend James. Billy, notwithstanding his social habits, was most punctual in the keeping of his books, being quite a pattern, in short, in this respect. But, in place of going up stairs—for which he was physically ill adapted—and examining the state of the mesh-tun for himself, he usually took the statement of "James, my friend," whom he looked upon as a Scotsman and the pink of honesty. But James, as we have already hinted, deemed it no dishonesty to cheat the exciseman, and no doubt he was encouraged to do so by his employers. It frequently happened, therefore, that considerable disparity prevailed between the gauge of the mesh-tun and the quantity of spirits run off. On such occasions James argued that the measurement of the vessel—a vast copper boiler—was incorrect, and insisted on having it overhauled; but Billy always deferred the operation, which involved a great many personal considerations, and matters went on as they were wont.

One night, after finishing his entries, Billy's tinny of grog was more profusely supplied than usual. The box of "common brown" was constantly in requisition, and Mr O'Brien in full social blossom. The chat went on amusingly, Billy, of course, the chief orator. He had strange notions of most subjects, and frequently indulged in visions of wealth and greatness to which his small salary was never likely to elevate him. The conversation naturally ran in this channel; for, like the tailor, Billy had "a soul above buttons," and James, who had a particular object to drive, kept the barmy noddle of his friend constantly up to the mark.

"Money lost! money lost! James, my friend," said Billy, "in my travels through the city I see a great many bills on the walls about money lost; but, James, my friend, I never find any of it! Now, do you know what I should do with it were I to find a purse?"

"Restore it to the owner, to be sure," replied James.

"No," said Billy, "do you think I'm such a flat, friend James! I'll tell you what I would do. I'd buy a lottery ticket,

and if it turned up a prize I'd divide the half of it with the loser of the money. Would'nt that be fair and honest, James, my friend?"

"Bravo, bravo, Mr O'Brien!" echoed James; "a capital idea—you'll be a great man before you die!"

"And why shouldn't I, the descendant of a race of kings? Come, James, my friend, fill that tinny once more; and here's to the lucky prize-ticket!"

James filled a brimmer, which Billy swigged with heart and soul in the toast. At length overpowered with grog and visions of greatness, coupled with the fatigues of the day, Billy drew on his nightcap, and prepared for a snooze on the little settle-bed which the apartment contained. "I'm tired," James, my friend, and meanwhile may as well take the world asy. I'll put the keys of the spirit-pump anunder my head; nothing, you know, can go wrong, and you can waken me when all's ready."

James applauded Billy's resolution, and after assisting to lay him in state, with the keys under his rosy gills, left him to his repose. Billy was sound asleep in a twinkling, snoring and spurting like a porpoise. Cautiously, and with light foot, James re-entered the apartment, and quietly removing the keys, it was not long ere the spirit pump was in full operation, running off the precious liquid, to the amount of fifty or a hundred gallons, without note or mark of Excise. This done, the keys were cautiously restored to their resting-place, Billy still snoring away, unconscious of the injury sustained by the revenue. On waking, "James, my friend," having roused him in his own good time, Billy groped for the keys with evident uneasiness, and grasping them in his hand, emitted an involuntary "ah ha!" expressive of satisfaction.

"I have had a drame, James, my friend," said Billy, as he sat upright in the settle.

"Ay, ay; and what sort of a *drame* was it Mr O'Brien?" said James, suppressing with difficulty a strong inclination to laugh. "Why, it was a drame," continued Billy; "but I knew it couldn't be true, James, my friend, for the keys were all the while snug anunder my head. I dramed, James, my friend, that the spirit-pump was going—thud, thudding away—and the galore of whisky running in a pure limpid strame. But I knew it could't be true, the keys being anunder my head, so I turned on my other side, and slept away. But I dramed the drame over again, only the sound of the pump became more musical, and I thought I was in fairyland, taking the world asy, and sipping tinnies of the real poteen. But sure it was all a drame," continued Billy, getting to his feet, "for when I awoke the keys were safe anunder my pillow!"

James of course assured him that it must have been wholly

a dream, and laughed heartily at what Billy conceived to be a very innocent source of mirth.

The quantity of spirits pumped off, however, had been too great to escape observation. The discrepancy in Billy's entries were remarked, and he was threatened with a serious inquiry. James defended himself on the old ground of the incorrect measurement of the mesh-tun; and the supervisor believing that the complaint might be well grounded, a day was appointed for a new admeasurement. This was precisely what James had long wished for, there being a large quantity of unentered spirits on the premises, which he never could venture to send away, as some one or other of the Excise officials were always going about; and he now set his brains to work upon the design he had in view.

The immense tun having been cleared out, the supervisor and all the district excisemen, including Billy O'Brien, were on the spot at the appointed time. They went down one by one into the huge basin, by means of a ladder, in the accomplishment of which awkward descent Billy nearly broke his neck, much to the amusement of his fellow gaugers. "James, my friend" was the last to go down, having some words of private instruction for the ear of the workman in attendance. "Here, Donnelly," cried he, in an authoritative tone, "take up this ladder, and be sure that you are within call when I order you to let it down again." "Ay, ay, sir," said the fellow, with a leer which no one observed or understood. Now, thought James, here I have you snug enough: if the men only do their duty, fifty goodly puncheons will be disposed of before you get out again!

The process of measuring went on amid sundry complaints of heat, the fires having been too recently withdrawn to allow the copper thoroughly to cool, and by the time it was completed the party were completely in a stew. A small difference, we may observe, was discovered between the estimated and real capacity of the vessel—enough to countenance the complaint of James, but not to account for the discrepancies. "Now, for any sake," cried the supervisor, "let us out of this Black Hole of Calcutta!" "Take the world asy," said one of his colleagues to Billy O'Brien, whose face appeared like a boiled turnip, so porous had it become with the heat and perspiration, and lamentably betrayed his best efforts at equanimity. James shouted on Donnelly to hand down the ladder, and when no answer was made to his repeated vociferations, he stormed and fumed in the best possible style against the negligent workman. He would have him dismissed instantly for thus insulting and ill-using his Majesty's servants. "Donnelly! Donnelly! where are you, you scoundrel, Donnelly!" At length, when the party had been well parboiled, and grown furious with the heat, a distant voice

was heard in reply, gradually nearing, till the devoted Donnelly, with well-sustained gravity and concern, let down the ladder amidst vehement shouts of abuse. He was dismissed on the instant by the inexorable James, and did not think it proper to wait till the exasperated officials of the Excise gained the level of the platform.

The plan was well conceived and adroitly executed, upwards of fifty puncheons having been carted away during the confinement of the excisemen. Some days afterwards, Donnelly, who had in reality never been off the pay of the establishment, was formally taken back at the earnest entreaty of the supervisor himself—the wife, the better to keep up the deception, having presented a lachrymose petition to his *honour* to intercede for the restoration of her discarded husband.

"James, my friend," had recourse to many similar expedients in outwitting the Excise, and enriching his employers at the public expense. Surely a system that admits of such practices must be pernicious in the extreme—not only individually but nationally—and to an extent which may not appear at first sight. The government of a country ought to be conducted upon principles of the most scrupulous equity—avoiding in all cases the slightest tendency to tamper with the cupidity of its subjects, otherwise it is hopeless to expect that public virtue, faithfulness and honour which ought to distinguish the merchants of a great nation. The Excise, as administered in this country, is not only most oppressive and inquisitorial, but absolutely a moral pestilence, whose insidious influence pollutes the very core of trading society, and poisons the atmosphere of all who come within its sphere.

It may not be uninteresting to state that "James, my friend," after long and ill-requited services, returned to his native country with a broken constitution—the effect of exposures to heats and colds in the performance of his arduous duties. Twisted and almost disjointed in every limb with rheumatism, he at length died of a decline. His worthy friend, Billy O'Brien, also sleeps with his royal ancestors, having been enabled, however, to "take the world asy" for some time before his death upon a retiring pension.

Edinburgh Amusements.

THEATRE ROYAL.

SATURDAY.—A very excellent bill of fare this evening was the means of drawing a large audience. The principal attraction, however, was, we presume, to see Miss P. Horton as the *Little Devil;* and a spirited little devil she made, although it was universally acknowledged that she sang *divinely*.

We never saw Mr Leslie to more advantage than on this occasion; his acting, as *Vincentio d'Cotella*, was full of sprightliness, and made us regret we do not see him more frequently in such parts. Miss Cleaver, as *Maria Theresa*, had little to do, but that little she did well. This lady is a treasure to any manager, for whatever she undertakes she throws her best energies into it.

Miss Fanny Bennett, you must really throw off that school-room style of yours, or you will greatly disappoint many of your friends in their hopes of your advancement in your profession. Take pattern by Miss P. Horton's acting—there's spruce and sparkling champagne in every movement of that lady. We are certain you have the capabilities, if you would but exert them.

Mr W. Cooper, as the quizzical tutor, *Gil Babbo*, threw a good deal of humour into his acting. Mr Tindel as the *King*, Mr Brindal as *Basili*, and Mr Fisher as *Medrano*, each deserve honourable mention.

The piece was highly successful, and Miss Horton was called forward when the curtain fell.

A Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Music followed. Mr Haigh sang "*Una furtiva lagrima*" very sweetly, but he should get a few lessons in pronunciation before he again undertakes to sing Italian. The clarionet solo by Mr J. A. Owen was splendidly executed. We have often noticed this gentleman when playing in the orchestra, to which he is a great acquisition. The clarionet is a delightful instrument when well played, but difficult to manage. Mr Owen may, however, truly be called its *master*.

Miss Eliza Arden sung "*Katty Darling*" with much feeling.—"*Rage, thou angry storm*," is not a song adapted for a concert on the stage; moreover, it requires a very deep-toned bass voice to give due effect to it. We admire Mr Durand's singing in general, but in this instance he was not successful. Miss M. Cruise gave "*Beautiful Spring*" in a pleasing style; but the *Buffo Duo* did not produce a comic effect. We are often surprised that singers are so fond of introducing Italian pieces, when they must be aware that not one in fifty of the audience understand a word of what is being sung. Let us be proud to uphold our own language and native music; assuredly it will give more pleasure, and excite more sympathy in a Scottish audience, than the most fashionable Italian or German music, sung by any but natives of those countries. It is well known that the aristocracy will patronise and follow in crowds any foreigner with a long name and a pair of mustachoes, paying ten, fifteen, or twenty shillings for a ticket to hear half a dozen songs in a concert-room, while they grudge a modest four to visit the boxes of the theatre, or, if they do condescend to enter, it is at half-price. How can they expect managers to engage such talent as Miss P. Horton, Miss Rebecca Isaacs, Miss Faucit, Miss St George, Miss Louisa Pyne, Mr Sims Reeves, &c., if they do not lend a helping hand to meet the expenses? We can truly say, that, with very few exceptions, the theatres have been principally supported this season by the pit, galleries, and upper boxes! but hold—*revenons nous a nos moutons*—we must return to the performances.

Box and Cox married and settled, sent us home with a pain in our

side, having been kept in a roar of laughter from beginning to end. The piece was altogether so well performed that we cannot particularise; but advise our readers, who enjoy a hearty guffaw, to lose no time in securing a box, and filling it with their friends and acquaintances.

MONDAY.—This evening the burlesque extravaganza of the *Fair One with the Golden Locks* was produced. Miss P. Horton as *Graceful*, the minstrel, acted and sung delightfully. Some of her songs were encored. Miss Eliza Arden, as *Queen Lucidora*, the fair one with the golden locks, looked the part charmingly, and played it as well. We were not aware that Mr W. Cooper was one of the operatic corps. He got through the music so surprisingly, that we suppose, now he has broken the ice, we shall have him playing "Captain Macheath" shortly.

We had written a notice on the performance of *Rob Roy* and *Macbeth* at the Royal on Wednesday and Thursday, which has unfortunately been mislaid, but will make up for our negligence next week. The national drama of *Gilderoy* followed. Mr Harcourt Bland played 'Gilderoy' in a very superior manner, and was much applauded. Mr Bruce Norton, as 'Jock Muir,' was excellent; while we say that he was equal to Mr Mackay in the same part, we say it with truth. Miss Somers, as 'Lilias Logan,' played and looked the part extremely well. Miss Nicol was all that could be desired in 'Mrs M'Tavish;' and Miss Batson, in the mute part of 'Janet,' was so well dressed, and acted it so briskly, that she kept the gods in a roar of loughter. The other characters were well sustained.

PERFORMANCES OF THE WEEK.

Friday, Nov. 5.—The Chameleon—La Bouquetiere—Box and Cox—Castle of Otranto.

Saturday, Nov. 6.—The Little Devil—Vocal and Instrumental Concert—Castle of Otranto—Box and Cox.

Monday, Nov. 8.—The Little Devil—Cramond Brig—The Fair One with the Golden Locks—Box and Cox.

Tuesday, Nov. 9.—The Twa Drovers—The Chameleon—The Fair One with the Golden Locks—Box and Cox.

Wednesday, Nov. 10.—Rob Roy—Box and Cox—A Lover by Proxy.

Thursday, Nov. 11.—Macbeth—Box and Cox—Gilderoy.

ADELPHI THEATRE.

The Adelphi re-opened on Saturday evening last. The brilliancy of the exterior, lighted up with numerous beautiful lamps, attracted a large crowd round the building long before the hour of opening. The interior has also been much improved by the addition of a number of new lustres, which throw a radiance into the circles that the magnificent gasalier in the centre failed to impart. We have often thought that this massive and expensive piece of glass-work is placed too high for efficiency, or even show. There can be no complaint now, however, for want of light—the audience being able to see to read almost in any part of the house. As a whole, we cannot imagine a

more elegant or comfortable theatre than the Adelphi is at this moment. A considerable addition has also been made, not only to the *corps dramatique*, but to the officials of the house, so that the establishment is in the best possible working order.

The first piece was "The Hunchback." Mr Powrie played *Clifford* with his accustomed talent. A contemporary (the *Courant*) remarks, that "he perhaps carried the leading character somewhat too much beyond the limits of comedy, into the tragic atmosphere; but still his performance evinced much study, and deserved the applause bestowed upon it." If there was a fault at all, it lay, we should say, in this direction; but the piece itself, or the author, is not blameless. There is an indistinctness in the position of *Clifford*, in the more trying part of the drama, which must be painful to the actor as well as to the audience. The part of *Julia* was performed by Miss Page, a lady new to an Edinburgh audience. Miss Page is, altogether, a very accomplished young lady, and made a decidedly favourable impression. Our contemporary already alluded to, remarks that—"Miss Page, having some claims to good looks, elegance of manner, and a handsome figure, made a more favourable impression upon the house than her dramatic standing seemed to warrant. It would, of course, be unfair to institute a comparison between one so youthful and the established ornaments of the profession—though it was evident that her performance was based upon the high standard to which they have accustomed the public; but without doing so, or judging too harshly of a first appearance, it was manifest that she failed to develop many of the leading features of the character. Her genial vivacity did much to endow it with life and colour; but she wants fire and energy to undertake parts which require much emotional power. Still, Miss Page is a welcome addition to the company, and she is already making progress in the public favour." There may be some degree of justice in this criticism of the *Courant*, still, we cannot go the length of saying that she "failed to develop many of the leading features of the character." Such an assertion is unjust. To us it appeared that Miss Page judiciously avoided that horrific tearing of passion to shreds, which the *gods*, and some accomplished critics, too, it would appear, are pleased to call "fire and energy," but against which we protest, and at all times involuntarily shut our ears. Miss Parker played the part of *Helen* with consummate ability, while Mr Wyndham was most correct and amusing in his personation of *Modus*. *Lord Tinsel* was well delineated by Mr Lyons, an actor who strikes us as improving rapidly. In impassioned passages, his desire to show the all-requisite quality of "fire and energy," carries him a little too far, and he loses the command, or rather, neglects, the modulation of his voice. He may, however, correct this fault by study. We agree with the *Courant* in thinking that "Mr Verner was not very successful as *Master Walter*, missing its quiet irony, and imparting instead an intensity that was almost savage. This performer has a rugged vehemence of manner, which may be mistaken for genuine tragic power. With much of this exaggeration of style he must part before he can attain prominence in his profession." Mr Verner should consider that all the serious characters he may be called upon to enact are not *Othellos*.

"Box and Cox married and settled," the characters by Mr Wyndham, Mr Webb, Miss Julia James, Miss Parker, and Mrs Atkins, kept the house in roars of laughter. It is a ridiculous, vulgar farce, notwithstanding.

We may here remark that all the old hands were received with the most encouraging plaudits as they appeared in the course of the performances. We were sorry to find Mr Webb still labouring under the effects of the cold which so greatly marred his performance of *Sir John Falstaff* at the close of the season.

Monday night we enjoyed a treat of no ordinary description. We allude to the performance of *Sir Pertinax Macsycophant*, in the play of "The Man of the World," by Mr Mackay, in reference to which we copy the laudatory remarks of the *Courant*:—"This we imagine is a new triumph, as we are not aware of his having before appeared in the character. Old as the veteran actor is, time has gently laid its weight upon him; and it is long, indeed, since we saw him exhibit so much energy and vigour. In undertaking the part, we entertained no doubt that by his performance he would add fresh laurels to his fame. The triumphant verdict of the crowded house last night is the best testimony of the success of the attempt. It will rank among his most remarkable impersonations for truth and finish. Coming so soon after Mr Phelps—whose portrait of the ambitious but crafty and selfish Scotsman, made a deep impression on the public mind—the gallant veteran has shown that he is no mere copyist; but, possessing the originating power of genius, he ventured to pourtray a monodramic character far beyond the range of his art. Almost without a single virtue, the part, so repulsive in its general aspect, warmed and expanded in Mr Mackay's hands, until the sympathy of the auditory, running counter to the moral justice of the play, became quite excited in his behalf. The external crust of blandness, assumed to conceal the ambition within, was admirably depicted; and in walk, look, and attitude—we might almost add, in turn of thought—the identity was complete. Several of the scenes were powerful in the highest degree—showing that while Mr Mackay is the most natural of actors, he is also one of the most finished and artistic. The other characters were well acted—Miss Page, among others, acquitting herself to admiration. We were glad to see the new company working with so much smoothness and effect; and we trust that the season, which gives such early promise, will maintain its high character." The *Courant* is unquestionably right—Mr Mackay had a "new triumph." We recollect having seen the once celebrated Harry Johnston in the same character, but, if our memory does not fail us, the two impersonations are not to be compared. Johnston was a "man of presence"—tall, stout and handsome—but it is with Mackay as with the late Kean, we forget the figure of the man in the power and richness of his acting. The vigour displayed by the venerable artiste, as the *Courant* remarks, was altogether astonishing. Thinking of his age, and how often he had trod the boards before an Edinburgh audience, we were amused and interested by a party of little ones, from two to six years old, seated before us, under the charge of an attendant. "When will *grandfather* appear!" was the

all-pervading question amongst them as the curtain drew, and they continued to prattle away about grandfather until Sir Pertinax did enter, amidst the deafening plaudits of the house. "Ah, that's grandfather!" exclaimed one and all; "how like him! that's just him!" and so on they went, keeping up a running commentry as the performance proceeded. In the more impassioned passages of the play, Sir Pertinax occasionally expresses himself strongly. "Grandfather's angry," the litt'e urchins would say; "hear how he swears! he does not do that at home though!" and then the clapping of their tiny hands, as the audience every now and again marked their approval of his unparalleled efforts. We need scarcely explain that the group before us were the grandchildren of Mr Mackay, seated there to witness the crowning success of their venerable and affectionate relative. To them the occasion must only have been partially understood, although it will no doubt make a deep impression upon their minds. To us their innocent prattle was unspeakably interesting. It spoke of domestic felicity that might well be envied.

On Tuesday was produced the highly moral and impressive play of "The Stranger." Such characters appear peculiarly akin to the genius of Mr Powrie, and he never fails to impress the audience with his own feelings—so intensely and truly are they thrown into his impersonations. The part of *Mrs Haller* was well sustained by Miss Page—effective without rant, and pathetic without an overflow of tears. The continued applause of the house, during and for some time after the performance, showed how much it was appreciated. "The Man of the World" was repeated as the afterpiece. Mr Mackay fully sustained the impression he had made the previous evening.

Wednesday.—For some time back every box and stall had been taken for the expected visit of Mr Sims Reeves on the 8th inst.; but a communication was received by Mr Wyndham, a few days before that date, postponing his appearance till the 10th. In the meantime, to make the bill of fare more attractive, Miss Rebecca Isaacs had been engaged, the band in the orchestra considerably augmented, and our old and distinguished favourite, Mackay, was to appear. All were on the *qui vive* and tiptoe of expectation, when lo, on the very morning announced, appeared the following, which we copy from the bill of the day:—

"*Adelphi Theatre, Edinburgh, 9th November*, 1852.

NOTICE.—It is with deep regret Mr Wyndham is compelled to announce that in consequence of the serious illness of Mr Sims Reeves he has found it quite impossible to appear in Edinburgh to fulfil his engagement. In order to satisfy the public that in this matter no blame is attachable either to Mr Sims Reeves or the management of the Adelphi Theatre, Mr Wyndham thinks that it is only fair to add an extract from a letter written to him by Mr Reeves on Monday morning, and received yesterday, at half-past two; and a telegraphic message received from Mr Reeves only one hour later. Mr Reeves writes as follows:—

'31, New Steine, Brighton, Monday morning.

'DEAR WYNDHAM,— * * * I fear I have put you to great inconvenience by not appearing to-night, but there was no help for it;

and if the engagement turns out well, I will remain a couple of nights over. I am confined to the house with inflammation in one of my eyes from cold. You had better call a rehearsal at Twelve on Wednesday, as I cannot start before Tuesday morning. I shall come by the express train, which arrives at half-past nine P.M.

"Telegraphic Message—'Inflammation so increased, impossible to travel. Compelled to decline engagement.'

"Mr Wyndham has only further to state that since then he has sent a telegraphic message to Mr Reeves, and received an answer, the result of which, he is sorry to say, is, that Mr Reeves' illness is so severe, that his medical advisers have absolutely prohibited him from attempting to leave home."

The disappointment, however, was not altogether unexpected. Mr R. has unfortunately gained some notoriety in London and elsewhere, for the same practice, and although, in this instance, the excuse sent may have been perfectly correct, still, it is not to be wondered at if some doubt should attach itself to the statement. We must confess that we feared the disappointment would greatly injure the night's receipts, but are happy to say that, with a most generous feeling towards Mr Wyndham, which cannot be too highly praised, all the boxes and stalls taken for that evening, with scarcely any exceptions, were retained. The consequence was that the house was crowded, and at a rough guess we should say there must have been between eighty and ninety pounds taken at the doors.

We have, on former occasions, given our opinion of Miss Isaacs' delightful performance in the part of *Marie* in the "Daughter of the Regiment," and she never acted and sung with more success than on this occasion. Indeed it seemed as if the excitement had infused a double portion of life and spirit into every one of the performers. At the termination of the opera, Miss Isaacs was called for, and conducted on by Mr Wyndham—after which, he addressed the audience to the following effect:—"Ladies and Gentlemen, the brilliant assemblage I see before me is a convincing proof that, notwithstanding the disappointment occasioned by the illness and consequent absence of Mr Reeves, the splendid talent I have been enabled to bring before you by the engagement of Miss Rebecca Isaacs and Mr Mackay has been fully appreciated. For the very great kindness shown on this, and former occasions, I beg leave to express my warmest and most grateful thanks."

On Mr Mackay's entrance in "Rob Roy" the applause from all parts of the house was deafening. His spirits never failed him from first to last. Mr Powrie's acting as *Rob Roy* was perfect. He comes nearer to the original, according to our idea, than any one we have seen, save and except Corbet Ryder, who was almost "the man himsel." We must also award the meed of praise to Mr Mungall as the *Dougal Creature;* he is decidedly a favourite with the gods in particular. His wild Highland fling was encored. Mr Wyndham filled the disagreeable part of *Rashleigh* with his usual ability. Mr Webb, as *Owen*, received much applause; but we were sorry to perceive he was still labouring under a severe hoarseness. Mr Josephs was very successful as *Major Galbraith*. He reminded us much of our late lamented

manager Mr Murray, the imitation was so close; the song "A famous man" was encored. *Captain Thornton* was well played by Mr Lyons, but we must protest against his allowing himself to be so knocked about by the *Dougal Creature*, for the amusement of the gallery folks. It causes an unpleasant feeling to see a brave officer so degraded, and that he is brave is shown by his speech in the subsequent scene with Helen Macgregor. *Diana Vernon* was sustained by Miss Isaacs, who sang the songs with most charming effect. *Helen Macgregor* was undertaken by Mrs Wyndham, who looked and acted the part admirably. The little part of 'Mattie' was played very neatly by Miss Ann Blake. The solos in the tramp chorus is too high for her sister—it sounded very disagreeably on the ear. She should marry a confectioner, and paint over the door, "Ice Creams." At the end of the piece, Miss Isaacs, Mrs Wyndham, and Mr Mackay were called for; they came on, together, and Mr Mackay shortly thanked the audience for the kindness he had invariably received at their hands.

Thursday evening, notwithstanding the severity of the weather—rain and hail prevailing till near the opening of the theatre—the house was well filled to witness the "Highland Reel," "Cramond Brig," and "Gilderoy." In the first piece Miss Isaacs was, of course, the great attraction. Excellent as she no doubt is as a concert singer, Miss Isaacs will ever be most acceptable to a Scottish audience when she devotes herself to the inimitable ballads and airs of the "land o' cakes," which she executes with a simplicity, grace and voice, that rarely, if ever, is found combined. "Whistle and I'll come to you, my lad," and "I'm o'er young to marry yet," elicited rapturous applause; but her singing of "Bonnie Annie Laurie," which she did in *Cramond Brig*, is perhaps her *chef d'ouvre*. It is in itself a delightful modernization of an old ballad, and as sung by Miss Isaacs, constitutes the very essence of Scottish melody and feeling. She was enthusiastically encored. We cannot say quite so much of her "Saw ye Johnnie comin'." It is a song of an entirely different character—more suited for a Wilson or a Templeton. Neither ought the singer to address any one, as Miss Isaacs did *Jock Howison*. The song is complete in itself, both in narrative and dialogue.

Mr Mackay was quite at home in "Cramond Brig." Mr Powrie as *King James*, Miss Isaacs as *Marion*, and himself as *Jock Howison*, a better cast could nowhere be found, and we never saw this very interesting little drama half so well performed. The only drawback lay in the part of *Tibbie* (Mrs Atkins). It was a shade too coarse.

In "Gilderoy," *Jock Muir*, the herd, is the absorbing character, and Mr Mackay played it to the life. The scene where he sups his "wee drap parritch" at the same table with his master, and archly evades the pointed questions put to him, was the most natural piece of acting we ever witnessed—worth all the admission money. "Gilderoy," however, as a whole, is too much akin to pantomine ever to become a favourite, like *Rob Roy* or *Cramond Brig*.

PERFORMANCES OF THE WEEK.

Saturday, Nov. 6.—The Hunchback—Box and Cox.

Monday, Nov. 8.—The Man of the World—Box and Cox—Masaniello.

Tuesday, Nov. 9.—The Stranger—The Man of the World.

Wednesday, Nov. 10.—The Daughter of the Regiment—Rob Roy.

Thursday, Nov. 11.—The Highland Reel—Cramond Brig—Gilderoy.

THEATRE-ROYAL, GLASGOW.

(*From a Correspondent.*)

"Masaniello" had a run for a week; but the Glasgow people soon tire, and must have more novelty. The pit was crowded nightly. Mr Davenport, who performed 'Masaniello,' was nightly called before the curtain at the close.

"Armand," by the celebrated American authoress, Mrs A. C. Mowatt, was produced on Thursday last, 'Armand' by Mr Davenport, his original character. The pit was crowded, and the piece well received.

"1000 Milliners Wanted" created much laughter, but the piece has been withdrawn.

On Saturday last "Julius Cæsar" was produced to a terrific house: 'Brutus,' by Mr Davenport; 'Mark Anthony,' by Mr Glover; 'Cassius,' by Mr Paumier. The cast was excellent, and the satisfaction experienced by the audience was manifested by immense applause. On being loudly called for at the close, Mr Glover led forth Mr Davenport and Mr Paumier, and made a complimentary speech.

"Armand" was repeated, along with "Masaniello," on Monday.

On Tuesday Mrs Glover appeared as 'Lady Teazle.' The house was literally crammed, and her success was complete. She is announced for 'Beatrice' on Friday (to-night.) Mr Glover as 'Benedict.'

"The Wife" was performed last night to an excellent house—'Julian St Pierre,' Mr Davenport. The piece went off delightfully.

"Othello" is to be performed to-night, by him, by request—and to-morrow "Macbeth."

As soon as Mr Paumier returns from Manchester, where he is acting with Miss Faucit, "Julius Cæsar" will be repeated. It was a complete triumph.

Mr Glover has appeared as 'Don Casar,' and Mr Lloyd in 'Artful Dodger' and 'Moses.' Several novelties, we hear, are in preparation.

MISS REBECCA ISAACS.

We are tempted this week to give two extracts from Perth papers, in order to prove that we are not singular in our opinion of Miss Rebecca Isaacs' talent as a vocalist, and are certain it will gratify our readers. The first is from the *Constitutional* of Wednesday, the 9th inst.:—"The Philharmonic Society's Concert in the City Hall came off on Friday last with the greatest eclat. As was to be expected, the Hall was filled on the occasion, and nothing could exceed the cordiality of the welcome which greeted the young and entertaining artistes. The programme consisted of vocal and instrumental music, and in both departments was very complete—the former being admirably sustained by the far-famed vocalist, Miss Rebecca Isaacs, who, after a lapse of seven years, comes again to delight us with all the freshness

and improvement of high professional experience. On former occasions we have been tempted to act the critic's part, but in the present we forbear, as it might savour of presumption to offer any remarks, save those of the strongest approbation, on one who, in her own distinguished walk, ranks among the first artistes of the day. Suffice it to say, that all her songs were given with thrilling effect, and received with the greatest enthusiasm, more especially 'Auld Robin Gray,' and that beautiful and expressive scena from *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, entitled 'The Mother's Cry,' which seemed to take the audience completely by surprise." . . .

The Perthshire Advertiser of November 11, says, after the announcement, "on this occasion, in addition to the large array of instrumental performers, we had again the pleasure of hearing Miss Rebecca Isaacs, whose thrilling and powerful voice was first heard on the opening evening of our City Hall. We do not care to say how many years have elapsed since then, but this we may say, that Miss Isaacs has no reason to complain of the march of 'silent time,' so far as her vocal powers are concerned—nor in any other respect, for that matter—for we never heard her with greater delight; and the enthusiastic applause and repeated encores, to which she yielded in the kindest manner, testified to her power to please. We do not care how soon we hear her again. Miss Isaacs has one qualification which should recommend her strongly to a Scotch audience. She is not only, of course, a beautiful singer of an English melody, which can be properly estimated by all classes, but she is quite at home in our Northern Doric, and gives the peculiar *twang* to it, which goes to the heart of a Scotchman, and which is often uttered by a mere English singer in such laborious fashion, as almost to make a canny Northlander commit a breach of the peace." . . .

PERVERTED USE OF THE BIBLE.—In that curious and valuable periodical, "The Journal of Psychological Medicine," there is an extremely interesting paper on "Homicidal Monomania," in which we find another example to be added to the long list of those who, like the Cenci and the Borgia, were at once diabolical and devout:—The notorious Burke, who was hanged for murder in Scotland, which he committed for the purpose of selling the remains of his unfortunate victims to the anatomical schools, was very partial and kind to children. He preached religious sermons, and the whole series of his murders was suggested by his confederate Hare reading aloud one winter evening the death of Benhadad by Hazael, in the Second Book of Kings." The writer adds, in a note;—"This is a very curious fact. The diabolical suggestion arose from Hare reading the account given (verse 15, chap. viii.) of the death of Benhadad, who was thus killed by Hazael: 'And it came to pass on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died.' Burke and Hare adopted the same plan. They made their victims drunk, and then covered their mouth and nostrils with wet cloths. Sometimes, by kneeling on the epigastrium, they forced a deep expiration, which emptied the lungs, and the wet cloths prevented the re-admission of air. This murderous method was so physiologically scientific, that it was suspected to have been suggested by some anatomist. This was not true; the above statement came out in evidence.

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